

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 CAB-02

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ETRAN, IS

SUBJECT: EL AL FLIES AGAIN

REF: TEL AVIV 7496

1. WITH RESUMPTION OF EL AL FLIGHTS JANUARY 5 FOLLOWING PLEDGE OF ELAL MAINTENANCE WORKTERS TO RESUME NORNAL WORK PRACTICES AND SUBMIT TO AUTHORITY OF HISTADRUT IN SETTLING WAGE DISPUTE WITH MANAGEMENT, ISRAEL IS NOW EVALUATING LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM WORST LABOR DISPUTE IN HISTORY OF EL AL AND ONE OF MOST SERIOUS PUBLIC SECTOR LABOR DISPUTES IN RECENT YEARS.

2. MOST IMMEDIATE REACTION CONCERNS NEED FOR EL A L TO RESTRUC-
TURE ITS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS. INSTEAD OF NEGOTIAT-
ING WITH TEN SEPARATE WORKS COMMITTEES, BOTH EL AL MANAGEMENT
AND HISTADRUT URGE FORMATION OF SINGLECOUNCIL OF WORKS COMMITEES
AUTHORIZED TO NEGOTIATE ON BEHALF OF ALL EMPLOYEES. WHILE
THIS WOULD NOT ELIMINATE SPECIAL WAGE DEMANDS FROM CERTAIN
SKILLED GROUPS, PROPONENTS BELIEVE IT WOULD PERMIT MOREORDERLY
SYSTEM OF WAGE NEGOTIATIONS AND MINIMIZE ABILITY OF ANY ONE
SECTOR OF EMPLOYEES TO ENGAGE IN LABOR DISPUTE AFFECTING
OPERATIONS OF ENTIRE COMPANY.

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3. ON BROADER LEVEL, MOST OBSERVERS COMMEND HARD-LINE

POSITION OF MANAGEMENT, GOI AND HISTADRUT IN DEALING WITH MAINTENANCE WORKERS SLOW-DOWN. THEY REGARD IT AS POSITIVE MEASURE IN STEMMING FUTURE ILLEGAL WORK STOPPAGES BY WORKERS IN ESSENTIAL SERVICES SEEKING TO EXPLOIT THEIR STRATEGIC POSITION TO WIN WAGE CONCESSIONS BEYOND OFFICIAL WAGE GUIDELINES.

4. SOME OBSERVERS REGARD METHODS USED IN ENDING EL AL DISPUTE AS MARKING TURNING POINT IN ISRAELI LABOR RELATIONS. AT VERY LEAST IT SIGNALS DETERMINED EFFORTS BY HISTADRUT AND PARTICULARLY THE GOI TO DEAL MORE VIGOROUSLY WITH CHRONIC LABOR RELATIONS PROBLEMS IN ESSENTIAL SERVICES WHICH OCCUR MUCH TOO OFTEN.

5. WHILE COMPANY HAD BEEN REPORTING LOSS OF ROUGHLY IL ONE MILLION PER DAY DURING NINE DAYS THAT FLIGHTS WERE SUSPENDED, ACTUAL LOSSES WILL BE SOMEWHAT LESS DUE TO SAVINGS IN OPERATING EXPENSES WHILE PLANES WERE GROUNDED.
KEATING

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